

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

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R 152130Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6465

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 1844

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS, CA

SUBJECT: STRAITS DEBATE/COMMITTEE II

REF: GENEVA 3409

EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED REFTEL AND REGRETS CANADIAIN TACTICS
THOUGH WE NOT PARTICULARLY SURPRISED. WE NOTE SEVERAL
FACTORS IMPORTANT TO ANALYSIS OF CANADIAN POSITON:

1. AS USDEL LOS AWARE, CANADA OFTEN ATTACHES GREAT
IMPORTANCE TO BILATERAL PROBLEMS WHICH IN US EYES ARE
OFTEN OF MINOR SIGNIFICANCE,AT LEAST IN WORL-WIDE
CONTEXT. THIS TO US, HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE
REPRESENTS A PROBLEM CONCERNING ONE STARIT AND ONE
COUNTRY, AND OBVIOUSLY OUR INTERESTS INVOLVE MANY
STAITS IN MANY AREAS. TO THE CANADIANS, HOWEVER,
HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE IS ONE OF THREE MOST IMPORTANT
STAITS IN THE WORLD. THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR
NORTHWEST PASSAGE. WHEN ON BILATERAL LEVEL US RE-
JECTED CANADIAN POSITON RE EASTPORT REFINERY, RED
FLAG MAY HAVE GONE UP, WITH RESULT THAT CANADA FELT
IT HAD TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IT HAD ITS OWN VIEWS ABOUT
HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE WHICH IT WAS NOT ABOUT TO GIVE
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UP IN DEFERENCE TO US INTERESTS.

2. WITH PUBLICLY ADVERTISED "ABANDONMENT" OF CANADIAN-US "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP," US CAN EXPECT CANADA TO FOLLOW MORE INDEPENDENT LINE. EMBASSY WOULD SUGGEST THAT US VIEWS DO NOT ALWAYS CARRY AS MUCH WEIGHT AS FORMERLY IN CANADIAN COUNCILS WHEN ITEM AT ISSUE INVOLVES CANADIAN NATIONAL INTERESTS. CANADA WILL NO LONGER SEMI-AUTOMATICALLY ADAPT ITS POSITION TO THAT OF THE US IF IT THINKS IT MAY HAVE MORE TO GAIN BY OPPOSING US OR BY SIDING WITH OTHER ELEMENTS.

3. EMBASSY OBVIOUSLY NOT IN BEST POSITION TO KNOW ABOUT SUCH MATTERS, BUT CONCEIVABLY CANADIAN POSITIONS/ ATTITUDES MAY IN PART HAVE BEEN PRICED CANADA BELIEVED IT HAD TO PAY TO OBTAIN THIRD-COUNTRY BACKING FOR CANADIAN CONTINENTAL SHELF IDEAS OR SOME OTHER TOPIC OF IMPORTANCE TO CANADA.

4. WHILE SUPPORT OF NATO REMAINS IMPORTANT PART OF CANADIAN POLICY, EMBASSY NOTES THAT CANADA UNDER TRUDEAU HAS OBVIOUSLY HAD MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP. IT HAS REDUCED ITS MILITARY COMMITMENT, THEN FOUND THAT IT COULD NOT REDUCE MUCH IF ANY FURTHER IF IT WANTED TO BE HEARD IN EUROPEAN COUNCILS. EUROPEANS HAVE REMAINED COOL TO CANADIAN DESIRES FOR CLOSER ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS, AND REGARD CANADA PRIMARILY AS SOURCE FOR RAW MATERIALS. SO PERHAPS CANADIANS THINK THAT IN FORA SUCH AS LOS, NATO SOLIDARITY NOT ALL THAT IMPORTANT, AND AMBASSADOR BEESLEY IS UNGUIDED MISSILE WHOSE LAST CONSIDERATION WOULD BE NATO SOLIDARITY.

5. PERSONALITY OF BEESLEY IS AN IMPORTANT, POSSIBLY CRUCIAL, FACTOR. EMBASSY NOTES FROM REFTEL THAT USDEL WAS "PARTICULARLY TROUBLED BY PROCEDURE USED BY CANADIAN DEL IN RAISING STRAITS ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THEM." EMBASSY HAS SELDOM KNOWN BEESLEY TO WORRY ABOUT PROCEDURES OR METHODS OF ADVANCING GOC INTERESTS, HOWEVER PAINFUL TO USG.DCM RECALLS BEESLEY'S REMARK TO HIM AFTER GOC'S UNILATERAL EXTENSIONS OF JURISDICTION SEA-CONFIDENTIAL

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WARD IN 1970 WHEN HE SAID (KRISHNA MENON-WISE) "THE ONLY WAY TO MOVE YOU FELLOWS IS TO KICK YOU HARD IN THE TAIL." HE THEN TRIED TO EXPLAIN THAT THE KICK WAS REALLY A CARESS, SINCE IT HELPED STIMULATE CUMBERSOME USG BUREAUCRACY IN RIGHT (BEESLEY) DIRECTION. HENCE, REFTEL PHRASE IS WELL PUT THAT "LACK OF CO-OPERATION WITH NATO ALLIES ON STRAITS AND OTHER LOS ISSUES SOMETIMES SEEMS TO GO BEYOND SUBSTANCE."

BEESELY RELISHES CAUSING TROUBLE AND HAS NOT ONLY GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT SINCE 1970, BUT BUILT CREDIT WITH GOC MANDARINS (AND PRESS AND PUBLIC) TO EXTENT THAT HE HAS FAIRLY FREE HAND WITH BOTH SUBSTANCE GOC POSITIONS AND NEGOTIATING TACTICS. HE WILL PRESS HIS INTERESTS ALMOST WITHOUT LIMIT, AND CONSIDERATIONS OF ALLIED SOLIDARITY OR US-CANADIAN RELATIONS WEIGH LITTLE.

6. DIFFICULTY IN KNOWING HOW US SHOULD REACT BEGINS WITH KEEN SUPPORT BEESELY HAS FROM TRUDEAU AND PRIME MINISTER'S CLOSEST FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER, IVAN HEAD, HIMSELF AN EXPERT ON INTERNATIONAL LAW (THESIS ON THE ARCTIC) AND AS INCORRIGIBLY NATIONALIST AS BEESELY.

7. LINKAGE MIGHT BE ATTEMPTED WITH OTHER NATO ALLIES, ASSUMING THEY IN FACT FEEL AS STRONGLY AS US REGARDING STRAITS ISSUE. IF THEY DO, PERHAPS THEY MIGHT BE WILLING REFER AT LEAST OBLIQUELY TO CANADIAN DESIRES FOR "CONTRACTUAL LINK WITH EEC." EUROPEAN TRADING PARTNERS OF CANADA MIGHT BE ABLE SWAY CANADIAN JUDGMENT SINCE THEY HAVE SOMETHING CANADA WANTS VERY BADLY.

8. APPROACH AT ORDINARY OR EVEN EXTRAORDINARY LEVELS IN EXAFF UNLIKELY BE AVAILABLE. IF LANGUAGE QUOTED IN PARA 6 REFTTEL IS BEST TEXT USDEL HAS TO MARKET, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO PUSH IT WITH HEAD AND OTHERS. THIS TEXT WOULD SEEM CLEAR WAY FOR FREE PASSAGE THROUGH AND OVER NORTHWEST PASSAGE AND HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE, SINCE EMBASSY UNAWARE ANY GOOD CANADIAN CASE THEIR WATERS WERE INTERNAL BEFORE 1958. MORE EXPLICIT GUIDANCE REQUESTED. WE DOUBT EFFICACY OF ANY TACTICS WITH BEESELY-LED CANADIAN DELEGATION UNLESS THEY ARE BASED ON COLD APPLICATION OF LEVERAGE DESIGNED TO

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THWART CANADIAN PURPOSES. ONE THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT BEESELY IS AWARE THAT HIS FREE HAND IN DEVELOPING HIS DELEGATION'S TACTICS MAKES IT VERY NECESSARY THAT HE BRING HOME THE BACON. IF WE HAVE LEVERAGE, IT WILL HAVE TO BE APPLIED IN UNSENTIMENTAL MANNER TO BE EFFECTIVE. PORTER

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS ADDED PER MR JOHNSON, S/S-O.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAW OF THE SEA, MEETING AGENDA, STRAITS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975OTTAWA01844
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750173-0788
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750549/aaaabscm.tel
Line Count: 161
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 GENEVA 3409
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <26 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STRAITS DEBATE/COMMITTEE II
TAGS: PLOS, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006